

As We Do Life Winners Announced at SWOSU

12.15.2009

Among the As We Do Life writing contest and winners at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford were (left) Tyler Brack of Duncan who won first place with his story "A Soldier" and Aashka Desai (third from left) of Zambia who tied for third place with "My Parents". With the students are As We Do Life founders Jayne Benkendorf and Doug Benkendorf.

Among the As We Do Life writing contest and winners at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford were (from left) third place winners Aashka Desai of Zambia with "My Parents" and Britnee Goure of Moore with "Pee Paw"; first place winner Tyler Brack of Duncan for "A Soldier"; judge Dr. Eithel Simpson and second place winner Dalton Holdge of Fort Cobb for "A Special Baseball."

Several Southwestern Oklahoma State University students were recently honored for their writings at a luncheon held on the Weatherford campus.

As We Do Life founders Doug and Jayne Benkendorf of Edmond were in attendance as 25 SWOSU students, faculty and staff celebrated 10 stories written by SWOSU students that have been published to date at aswedolife.com. The website is a project created by the Benkendorf family to tell stories of acts of kindness one has seen or experienced.

SWOSU Student Government Past President Greg Franklin introduced the project to the campus in 2008 after writing his first As We Do Life story. He then used the "post a dream" option on the site. His dream then was to join the Peace Corps after graduating from SWOSU and make a difference. He currently serves in the Peace Corps and his blogs from Africa are featured on the web site.

"Greg's story and his journey after he became an 'As We Do Life' author show the power of positive thinking and action through this venue," Doug Benkendorf told those in attendance.

The Benkendorf's interest in expanding into the college community came after As We Do Life received a story from a college coed which simply started off "Please...please help." The student was in her dorm room struggling to cope with the loss of one of her suite mates to a hanging-suicide.

"Think if someone had simply reached out to that young woman. What if she had been exposed to just a few random acts of kindness and the stories of the same. She might be alive today," Benkendorf said. "That is what we do at As We Do Life, share, celebrate and discuss acts of kindness."

Cindy Dougherty, dean of students at SWOSU, said she appreciates this great source of positive energy and is pleased that Collegiate Activities Board and Franklin got SWOSU involved in the project. CAB sponsored the As We Do Life writing contest and winners were announced at the luncheon.

Tyler Brack of Duncan won first place with his story "A Soldier." Dalton Holdge of Fort Cobb finished second with "A Special Baseball." There was a tie for third place between Aashka Desai of Zambia with "My Parents" and Britnee Goure of Moore with "Pee Paw." These and more stories are available for comments by all readers and authors at aswedolife.com.

"The contest may be over but the good works are just beginning and expanding," said Dr. Eithel Simpson, SWOSU professor and one of the contest judges. "I took the '7 Minute Pledge' at the lunch today as did 20 others from SWOSU. It will make a difference for good. It is helping and encouraging people in their every day lives."

Other judges were Dr. Patsy Parker, Karen Sweeney and Brian Adler.

"With all the negative things going on in our world and economy right now, it's a breath of fresh air to read about good things and the positive aspects of life," Parker said. "Sometimes we forget just how lucky we are."